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House passes legislation giving health benefits to Filipino vets

SAN DIEGO, California – Congressman Bob Filner proudly announced that his legislation to give health benefits to Filipino Veterans of World War II has passed the House of Representatives!

“Today marks a giant step forward in our quest to correct the injustice that was inflicted upon them by the 1946 Congress,” said Congressman Filner. “Over 50 years ago, Filipino soldiers were drafted into service by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. They fought side-by-side with soldiers from the United States mainland, exhibiting great courage at the epic battles of Bataan and Corregidor. It was quite a shock when Congress deprived many of the benefits that they were expect-

ing.”

“These brave veterans risked their lives for this nation. Their contribution to preserving freedom cannot be underestimated. As the Japanese forces threatened to overrun the Philippines and seize control of the entire Pacific theater, they fought bravely and suffered mightily. Now, nearly six decades later, they finally have hope of receiving the health benefits and revered status as U.S. veterans that they deserve!”

Since he was elected to Congress in 1992, Congressman Filner has been a tireless fighter for this issue. In 1997, he was arrested in front of the White House during a protest with Filipino WWII veter-

ans demanding benefits and fair treatment. Recently, Congressman Filner brought Filipino celebrity Lou Diamond Phillips to Washington, D.C. to lobby for the bill.

“Although it may take decades, injustice can be corrected,” said Congressman Filner. “This bill is a giant step towards restoring dignity and honor to these proud veterans. Over fifty years of injustice burns in the hearts of the Filipino World War II veterans and in the hearts of their sons and daughters. This bill says that we will begin to remedy this historical injustice. We will make good on the promise of America.” The bill, H.R. 2357, now moves to the Senate for consideration.